

THE AFFLICTIONS OF MINISTERS FOR THE BENEFIT OF THEIR PEOPLE:

A
S E R M O N

PREACHED AT THE FUNERAL

— O F —

MRS. MARY ANNA PERKINS WIGHT

WIFE OF REV. D. WIGHT, JR.

SCITUATE, OCTOBER 28, 1853.

B Y A B E L G . D U N C A N ,

PASTOR OF THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, HANOVER, MASS.

B O S T O N :

C. C. P. MOODY, PRINTER, 52 WASHINGTON STREET.

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By ABEL G. DUNCAN,

PASTOR OF THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, HANOVER, MASS.

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SCITUATE, Nov. 11, 1853.

REV. A. G. DUNCAN,

MY DEAR BROTHER :

I write in behalf of the following persons : Mrs. Mary V. Cook, Mrs. Julia A. Peakes, Miss Ann M. Litchfield, Mrs. Dolly Young, and Mrs. Elizabeth C. Litchfield, appointed as a Committee by the *Ladies Sewing Circle*, to request of you, for publication, a copy of your very appropriate, instructive, and comforting sermon, delivered on the late funeral occasion of my beloved and deeply lamented wife.

Very truly yours,

In the deep waters of affliction,

DANIEL WIGHT, JR.

HANOVER, Nov. 18, 1853.

REV. DANIEL WIGHT, JR.,

DEAR BROTHER :

With much diffidence, in compliance with the request of the *Ladies of the Sewing Circle*, I furnish a copy of my sermon, committing it to the blessing of God, in the hope that it may be for the comfort and salvation of his people.

Yours in the fellowship

Of the sufferings and work

Of the ministry,

A. G. DUNCAN.

S E R M O N .

2 CORINTHIANS, 1 : 6. *And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings, which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation.*

God has created and placed us in the relation of mutual dependence. Howsoever natural it may be for us, in our fallen condition, to turn in upon ourselves those affections which should flow out to others, yet "no man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." The more fully we realize this great truth in our views, affections, plans, and life, the more completely shall we answer the great design of our creation, and of redeeming grace. The Apostle realized it. Hence it stands out so prominently in his example and teachings. He knew that the apostles and ministers of Christ, called to the honorable work of unfolding his unsearchable riches of grace and mercy, would be subjected to many sufferings in body and in mind, not only common among other christians, but also in some respects, peculiar to no other class of men. He had a comprehensive view of the great design of God in thus subjecting them to trials. One part of that design is revealed in the text, which

leads me on the present occasion, so solemn and intensely interesting to every heart, to consider

The afflictions of ministers, in their relation to the comfort and salvation of God's people.

I. Ministers, as well as their people, must expect afflictions.

Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivereth him out of them all. Ministers must share afflictions which are common to all in the various relations of life. They are called to part with loved ones, though the parting occasion deep sorrow and anguish. They find, in many cases, that the dwelling has been darkened by the removal of that light, which it was so pleasant for the heart to behold. The bereaved weeps

" O'er a heart and home made desolate ; for she, his much beloved,
From the circle of her household ones, has been by death removed."

He weeps, it may be on the pale, cold face of a beloved child, and laments the departure of friends dear, as was Jonathan to David. These and other afflictions are not to be counted as strange things. They are the common lot, which falls to human experience.. They, however, make their deep and solemn impression, which shall have an abiding influence, not only on themselves, but also on many others, who may be connected with them in the church of Christ.

Ministers of the gospel, are often called to endure afflictions peculiar to themselves, as the ambassadors of Christ to a revolted world. In this respect, they are conformed to the sufferings of the Lord, their Master, and they find that they must endure hardness. Such was the experience of the Apostles. Such has been the experience of their successors in the work of the ministry. It is not necessary to specify the different kinds of affliction, which, as ministers of the gospel, if found faithful, they are called to experience. The Scriptures teach them that afflictions await them, and observation and their own experience confirm the inspired declarations. But it is not so much the fact that they suffer, as the relation, which it has to the highest welfare of the people of God, that claims our attention.

II. The afflictions of ministers have a relation to the comfort and salvation of God's people.

This proposition is plainly revealed in the text. Whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation.

The people of God are dear unto him; for they are his, not only by creation and preservation, in common with others, but also by the eternal purpose of redemption which selected them from among the lost and rebellious, and predestinated them to be conformed to the image of his Son; and by that effectual calling which changed all the affections and purposes of their hearts;

and by the work of sanctification, which makes them more and more like himself; and by constituting them his Sons and joint-heirs with Christ, their elder Brother. Being his in these respects, which make them the excellent of the earth, God has made abundant provision for them.

All things are theirs, by covenant and by oath. Having died for them, Jesus rose again, and ascended up on high, leading captivity captive, and receiving gifts for men. Among those gifts are Pastors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. They are called of God as was Aaron, and receive their commission from Christ; and their qualifications and stations are allotted to each severally as he wills. But their knowledge must not be the mere result of study and meditation. It must be experimental to be of the greatest advantage to the church of Christ — the people of God. If they are what their office imports, they endeavor to make all their attainments combine for the advancement of God's people in knowledge and holiness, according to their circumstances and wants. They should be sons of thunder to denounce the terrors of the Lord against the rebellious and impenitent; also sons of consolation to them who need comfort, that by speaking as dying men to dying men, they may promote their eternal salvation. They enter the school of Christ by regeneration and faith, and he opens their ear to instruction, and their heart to reproof, and he teaches them many things by

his providence, as well as by his word. He is the good Shepherd and they know his voice. They follow his call, and his rod and his staff comfort them. His rod of discipline in the various afflictions of life, is a comfort, for they know that it is wielded in covenant mercy, which will make *all* things work together for good to them that love God. His staff of promise is a comfort; for each promise is sure as the unchanging purpose of God. It is yea and amen in Christ Jesus to believers.

They cling with firmer hold to the promise, and being comforted thereby, they find it good to have been afflicted. They believe, and therefore speak; they know, and therefore testify. Called to pass through trials and afflictions, they realize the faithfulness of Christ to his promise to be with them alway, even unto the end of the world, and are comforted by his gracious presence. Though sorrowing, they are enabled to rejoice in the Lord. They study the scriptures and the writings of holy men, who have labored before them in the ministry. But this is not enough. They study divinity on the opening leaves of God's providence, in the bitter things thereon recorded against them. They read and meditate. They learn many things by experience which could not be so well taught by precept; and he who speaks from experience, has advantage of others in many respects.

There are minor chords in the harp of life, and he, who has been taught by the Master to strike them in

unison with his own sorrows, is sure to harmonize with the vibrating chords of the human heart. Such was the skill of the sweet Psalmist of Israel, taught by his own afflictions, to speak responsively to the hearts of millions, who have in his Psalms the secret sources of consolation, the materials of appropriate prayer, and the means of salvation. Ministers of the gospel have attained to eminent skill in addressing their fellow men, who were in adversity and affliction—men under the anguish of conviction for sin, in distress from a sense of God's fearful displeasure against transgressors. Their skill has resulted, not so much from their superior talents and learning, derived from nature and from books, as from long experience in the lessons of affliction and suffering in the school of Christ.

I have alluded to the royal Psalmist of Israel, whose inspired harp will never cease to soothe the sorrows, and to animate the joys of God's people. His afflictions qualified him to speak to their hearts in all time. For though his Psalms were occasional productions, their materials were taken from the depth of human experience, and were wrought into form under the pressure of adversity. Hence, his melting strains thrill through the innermost feelings with heavenly consolations.

Moses, the Lawgiver and Commander of Israel's hosts, was eminently fitted by his afflictions to be their deliverer from bondage. By faith, Moses, when he was come

to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. His afflictions had a relation to the comfort and salvation of God's people, which could not have been dispensed with. It was through many years of discipline and training, that he was fitted for the great mission of deliverance, and of establishing them as a nation with laws and institutions; of instructing them by doctrines dropping as the rain, and distilling as the dew; which by the grace of God, made that nation the most wonderful and blessed nation in the world.

Other men, whom the Lord raised up as prophets, were called to suffering, and by it were fitted to discharge their office more profitably to the church of God. Take, my brethren, says the apostle James, the prophets who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience.

The Lord of glory, when he humbled himself to take on him our nature, though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things that he suffered, and as the Captain of Salvation was made perfect through sufferings. For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted. For we have not an High Priest, which cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

“ He knows what sore temptations mean,
For he has felt the same.”

The Apostles, called to be witnesses of his resurrection, and preachers of the gospel, were led by the grace and presence of Christ, to rejoice that they were counted worthy to suffer for his name. When Ananias of Damascus, was sent to open Paul's eyes, the Lord said, I will shew him what great things he must suffer for my name's sake. That his sufferings had relation to the highest welfare of the people of God, he has taught us in the text.

The ministers of the gospel in subsequent ages, were called to endure afflictions in great variety and severity for the sake of Christ and his people. Vast good, in consequence, was accomplished. Those holy men, who lived in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, were chosen in the furnace, and endured a great fight of afflictions. They were men for the times, men of stature and of might; they dug deeply into the hidden mines of truth and experience, and their ponderous tomes are the rich storehouse of doctrinal and experimental knowledge. Their afflictions have still a relation to the spiritual good of the people of God. How much comfort and consolation have his suffering people derived from Baxter's Saint's Rest, written in a time when he was expecting daily to be summoned to eternal scenes. By faith in the Lord, affliction placed him on an eminence above the troubled scenes of earth, from

which he could view the celestial city, the eternal hills of the heavenly Zion, and the pure river of life; and his rapt soul was qualified to encourage the people of God, as they labor to enter into that rest. Fit companion of Saint's Rest, the Dreamer's Pilgrim lures to heaven and leads the way. How many thousands of God's people have been comforted and blessed by the rich lessons of experience, which Bunyan stored up in his Pilgrim's Progress. Though confined by bigotry and intolerance for twelve years in Bedford jail, yet the truth was not bound, and his free mind and heart leaped forth in the spirit and power of Christ, to the blessed work of edifying the people of God in subsequent ages.

I might proceed to illustrate the subject by showing how the afflictions of ministers, tend to their own comfort and salvation, by the grace of God. Blessed be the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them that are in any trouble by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. But I will conclude by

REMARKS AND ADDRESSES.

1. If the afflictions of ministers have a relation to the spiritual welfare of God's people, then the doctrine of vicarious suffering is true in fact.

Men have objected to the death of Christ being considered as vicarious, or a substitute for the punishment of sinners who believe in him. But we should consider

that such is the revealed fact ; that the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed ; that he was made sin — a sin-offering for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. This principle of suffering for the good of others, which is vicarious in its nature, is manifestly a principle of the divine government. The apostle understood it, as is evident from the text, and he testifies his willingness to endure all things for the elect's sake. The Savior recognized it, when he told his disciples that they would be baptised with the same baptism wherewith he was baptised — the baptism of sufferings for the good of others. We see this principle illustrated even in the ordinary walks of life. Men are called to suffer, and even to die for the sake of others. It is the wonderful provision of God's wisdom and mercy that the sufferings of his dear Son, were for the redemption of his people, and that the afflictions of his servants shall have an influence in bringing them home to glory and blessedness in heaven. Let us then turn to the cross of Christ, and learn that, if One died for all, then they who live, should show their gratitude and love for such unparalleled sufferings and sacrifices, by henceforth living unto him.

2. The people of God have a deep interest in the afflictions of ministers of the Gospel. This interest, if rightly improved, would be of surpassing value. It should awaken thought and reflection. It should induce them to abound in prayer for them, that the vari-

ous trials and afflictions of life may be sanctified, to make them more faithful and devoted, earnest, affectionate, and heavenly minded in the good work. It should induce frequent self examination, that they may know whether they have indeed been benefited by the afflictions of those who have been set over them in the Lord. If their afflictions have enhanced the value of the ministry in their estimation, drawn more closely around the heart the bands of friendship and affection, made them more heedful of the word, more prayerful, watchful and abounding in good works, they have reason to believe that the afflictions of ministers are indeed for their sakes. How is it with you, my brethren? Shall not the manifold afflictions of your beloved pastor be improved by you, to your spiritual profit?

3. We learn from this subject, one reason why the death of christians is precious in the eyes of the Lord.

It is because, having lived unto the Lord, they die unto the Lord. They die, and it is the solemn occasion of suffering affliction to many hearts, which are thereby made better. The affliction is not joyous but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness, unto them which are exercised thereby. The child of God glorifies him in life and in death; and in death that good is consummated, for which he labored and prayed in life.

“ For us they languish, and for us they die;
And shall they languish, shall they die in vain ?”

We have reason to rejoice even in the sorrow of bereavement, that our loss is not without some gain ; that the gain unspeakable and eternal, is not altogether for the dear departed, but through the good influence of their living and dying example, in answer to their prayers, now ended and exchanged for eternal praises, we share a little of the profit. While we rejoice in the same hope of the glory of God which animated them, we may glory in tribulation also, which being sanctified, works out for us such good.

4. The subject and the occasion lead me here to present a brief

OBITUARY.

Mrs. Mary Anna Perkins Wight, eldest daughter of Rev. Jonas and Mrs. Rhoda K. Perkins, was born in Braintree, April 2, 1816. She was a lineal descendant of Rev. James Keith, from Scotland, the first minister of Bridgewater, Mass., a man "of singular sweetness of temper and eminent piety," and a relative of Rev. Daniel Perkins, his successor in the ministry.

On the 5th of May following, she was planted in the house of the Lord within the bonds of the gracious covenant by baptism. She was trained in early childhood to habits of useful industry, and assiduously brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and will be remembered as an eminent illustration of the value and success of the judicious literary, moral and religious cul-

ture which she enjoyed at the hands of her bereaved parents. Her education, which was begun in the family, carried on in the district and select schools of her native village, and in the Female Seminary at Ipswich, under Misses Grant and Lyon, principals, was continued through life. Having from an early age an active and inquiring mind, she was ever, either a scholar or a teacher; as a scholar, punctual, diligent, persevering, and accurate; as a teacher, becoming such at fifteen, apt to teach, mild yet firm in her discipline, industrious, faithful, successful and popular. She taught schools in Dorchester, Randolph, Abington, Little Compton, R. I. as well as in her native place. Ever manifesting a deep interest in the intellectual and moral improvement of her pupils, she was also, in many instances, successful in her endeavors to lead them to the Savior.

A minister, in whose society she taught a select school for a number of terms, says in a letter of condolence to her parents: "My acquaintance with your daughter gave me a very high opinion of her intellectual worth. I have often referred to her as a beautiful model of female character, — prudent, modest, unobtrusive, intelligent and religious. Her influence in her school was an intelligent and sanctified influence, which I greatly valued; and I was often interested for some years after she left, to hear people speak with confidence and hope of individuals, because they had been under the excellent influence and instruction of Miss Perkins."

A subject of serious impressions at times, from a very

early age, she was in youthful days, hopefully converted, and, after much self-examination, and seeking counsel from her parents and from God, she united, July 1st, 1832, with the church of which her father is still the beloved pastor, in connection with twenty-five others, including a sister. Her religious character was formed on enlightened views of evangelical truth, of which her belief was unwavering, and her life a practical illustration. From childhood she was peculiarly dutiful and affectionate, marked for amiableness of character, discreteness and truthfulness, and in her conduct exemplary, yet she was deeply sensible of her own imperfections, and realized her dependence on renewing and sanctifying grace, to fit her for acceptable service in the sight of God, or to make her an object of his complacency. Though hopefully a subject of that grace, she was modest in her estimate of her own religious character. It is however but just to say, that it was marked by decision, consistency, uniformity, activity and unobtrusive efficiency. The church was, indeed, blessed in receiving to its fold this lovely youth. For her deep interest in its peace and prosperity was constant; her efficiency in the Sabbath School and in the various benevolent societies of which she was a member, unfailing; and her concern for the well-being of the young, temporal and spiritual, sincere and unremitting.

She was eminently fitted by nature, education, grace, and experience in her parent's family, for the important relation of a helpmeet in the ministry. She was mar-

ried to the Rev. Daniel Wight, Jr., of Scituate, April 28, 1851. There was great joy for him, for many felt assured that he had, in his great afflictions, found favor of the Lord. She entered cheerfully and heartily, the new sphere of usefulness, both in the family and among the people of his charge. She identified herself with the church in Scituate, and felt a growing interest in everything which was adapted to promote its welfare as well as that of the Society. She was willing to labor to the extent of her ability in the Sabbath School, in the Maternal Association, in the Female Prayer Meeting and sewing circle, not shunning any responsibility, which her station seemed to impose.

It was her opinion, which she exemplified in practice with modest propriety, that the mother, in the absence of the father, ought to maintain family worship. The home of her husband was made glad by her presence, and the precious influence of her unceasing industry, her christian graces, sweetness of temper, and sincere and cordial sympathy. She was peculiarly qualified to become a mother to the child that had been twice made motherless, and to take charge of her education. The heart of her husband safely trusted in her, and he looked on his home as "almost a Paradise." She seemed to have the promise of many years of christian usefulness. But God seeth not as man seeth. She was to be called to a higher sphere, for which she seemed to be prepared. A few weeks before her death, speaking

of the skeptical tendencies of some, she expressed with peculiar pleasure and emphasis, an unshaken confidence in the divine origin and authority of the Scriptures. Not a doubt seemed to remain. Still nearer her sickness, she spoke of her hope in Christ. With serious deliberation, as if realizing the uncertainty of life, she said, "I may be deceived, and yet I have a hope through faith in the Redeemer, above all price." Though she felt herself unworthy, she could joyfully repose all in Him. This hope was an anchor to her soul, sure and steadfast.

She met with cheerful fortitude the severe suffering of her last brief sickness. A smile would often light up her countenance with almost heavenly beauty. Though hope was cherished that she would recover till near the last, yet it was suddenly manifest that she was sinking. Her husband had only time to direct her mind to the Savior, and to catch her last words, "He is precious, yea, the one altogether lovely." This sad event was witnessed by the now thrice smitten husband, Oct. 26, at 5, A. M. She was aged 37 years, 7 months. Her infant son followed her at the age of only 42 hours. The Heavenly Husbandman entered his vineyard and plucked the fairest, ripest fruit. Happy spirit, we give thee joy. Thou hast reached thy home, and thy precious babe is safely folded in thy bosom.

My dear brother, two years* ago, you and your dearly beloved were in my study, as you were preparing words 'of consolation' for my stricken heart. In my sorrow then, I rejoiced in your prosperity in possessing one so much adorned both by nature and by grace ; — One whom I have known for years as a model daughter and woman, who has given evidence for more than two years, of having been a model wife.

Ah ! little did I think that, so soon, I should be called to direct your bleeding heart to the same sources of relief and comfort. I do not speak to teach you, for I would gladly learn from the depths of your experience in affliction. In the behalf of your brethren, I proffer you our most tender sympathy. We weep with you. Our hearts most deeply feel your sore breavement. But how powerless are words ! How impotent is man ! But the eternal God is almighty, and underneath are the everlasting arms. His compassions are boundless. He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men. What a blessed thing to be swallowed up in the perfect will of God ! For infinite knowledge cannot be mistaken ; infinite wisdom cannot err ; infinite goodness cannot do wrong ; infinite mercy can but pity ; infinite justice cannot do an injury ; infinite faithfulness will remember and keep covenant ; and infinite power cannot be defeated.

* Oct. 16, 1851. At the Funeral of Mrs. Lucia H. Duncan.

Thrice bereaved brother, be comforted. As you mourn in your dark and lonely hours, you will be still. I would not say, weep not, for I know that a bursting heart is relieved by tears. But while weeping, look to Jesus and cast on him your burden of sorrow and care, and he will impart sufficient grace.

Your precious dead still lives — yea, all three live in glory and blessedness. The Lord Jesus your Elder Brother had need of them, and they have entered the King's palace. He is not your *Rival*, for he has taken what belonged to him. They are with God. Though clouds and darkness are round about him, yet justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne. They are with Christ who doeth all things well. Could you behold how much he has already done for *them*, and how much he designs, by this affliction to do for *you*, and for the church of God, you would glory in tribulation. A little while and you will behold them again. Your dead shall rise again, and then will you behold with adoring wonder the wisdom and goodness of God, in making your afflictions useful in better fitting you for the blessed work of the ministry, as well as for more exalted glory and bliss in heaven. We have found it good to be afflicted, nor can we doubt, that the church of Christ will be unspeakably benefitted in the immense good which will be the result. I trust that you are yet destined to far more extended usefulness in consequence of these manifold afflictions, for the glory of God and

the salvation of perishing sinners. Thousands of hearts, that might otherwise have remained insensible, will be favorably affected. Though sorrowing, yet rejoice my dear brother, that you are counted worthy to suffer for such glorious results. Let not your heart be troubled, you believe in God, your Refuge and Stronghold in this day of calamity. Believe also in Christ who will not leave you comfortless. Faint not nor be weary, for he will never forsake you. Trust God and take courage. He is your Father, infinitely great, kind, merciful and gracious. A full heart would prompt me to say more. But I have said more than is required, to one so taught in the school of affliction. May the Lord God, your Rock and Strong-tower be with you to support and comfort you.

May the Daughter, thrice made motherless, now remember how Jesus said, Suffer little children and forbid them not to come unto me. Go to the precious Saviour dear child, and tell him how sorry you are, ask him to heal your heart and to comfort you. He will bless you. Treasure up in your heart and obey the many words of instruction, which your beloved mother imparted to you.

The bereaved Parents need not be told that God their heavenly Father is faithful to his Covenant. He has taken the precious, darling child, because he loved her. She was his by many ties; by creation and redemption; by baptismal dedication, and voluntary consecration;

in answer to the thousand prayers in her behalf, ever giving joy to your hearts, and by her many virtues rewarding your care and labor for her; not merely a daughter, but also a friend, a sister beloved; she gave promise of great usefulness in the church below, and you rejoiced in the sweet hope. But her Lord knew that she could be more useful in death than in life; in heaven than on earth. Her mission is ended. She has gone to her glorious rest, and she seems to say, as she sweetly beckons, "Stricken husband, bereaved parents, brothers and sisters, dear on earth, dearer now in bliss, weep not that I am taken before you. The time is short. Only a few more years of patient continuance in well-doing, seeking for glory, and honor, and immortality; and we shall meet to part no more."

She was dear to you, but she is infinitely dearer to God, our heavenly Father. While reflecting that she will not return to you, but that you will soon be at rest with her; be comforted in view of the good, which will doubtless result from this solemn providence, in your own united and more earnest labors for the comfort and salvation of the people of God. The beauty of the Lord which was upon her on earth, has now become ineffable and glorious, in his immediate presence.

May the Brothers and Sisters, in the severed link of the golden chain, behold the goodness of God. For it is not lost, but is laid up among the treasures in heaven. Are the remaining links as well fitted to be transferred

there to be re-united never more to be broken? A beloved Sister has gone before, to draw you by sweet influences and gentle memories, to a closer walk with God, to more strenuous endeavors to be useful; inducing you by her precious example to be also ready.

The members of this Church, called again to lamentation over the early taken, should be quickened by this repeated judgment, this severe affliction, to greater and ever increasing activity in the cause of Christ. The departed, whom you loved, was expecting to have lived many years to do good among you. But her work is done. Let her blessed influence here still live. Life is short, but life's great work is of immense importance. The voice of providence to-day is, Up and be doing with your might. Seek for the Spirit, that this great affliction may be followed by a glorious revival.

My beloved brethren and sisters in the ministry, God is speaking to us loudly this day. An aged sister,* a beloved mother in Israel has recently been taken away; and now we mourn another called at the noon of life, in the ripe bloom of womanhood. O do not that beautiful form, those pale lips, yon open grave, and desolate dwelling, and this bereaved circle, admonish us to be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in our work; to be more spiritual, more prayerful, watchful, zealous

* Mrs. Sheldon of Easton.

and humble? Soon the master will come. He has called for the Sisters, soon he will call for the Brethren. Who will go next? Let us be sober and watch unto prayer, seeking to be found as well prepared as those dear sisters who have gone before us.

Shall I not say a word to the impenitent? Will you not take the warning, which is conveyed to you in the solemn scenes of to-day? On the brink of eternity, far from God and Heaven, nigh to death, to judgment and eternal retribution, you may die as *suddenly*, but it cannot be as safely, while in sin. Be warned. Looking for the last time on that pale countenance, so calm and beautiful in the repose of death, listen to the still small voice falling impressively on the ear of the inner man—Turn from your ways unto Christ, lay hold on his salvation and prepare to meet your God.



